BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

BC Stats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue 07-48 November 30th, 2007

- **Province's median age reaches 40 as of July**
- **Provincial room revenues increased 0.8% in August**
- **Canada's GDP advanced 0.7% in the third quarter**

Population

- **British Columbia's population continues to get older, with its median age reaching 40 years as of July 1, 2007; a 1.6 year increase over the 2002 level.** The median age in BC has increased by more than 12 years since 1971, when it was 27.8 years. This is mostly due to the long term decline in the fertility level, as well as a steadily increasing life expectancy. BC's population is older than in other parts of the country–the Canadian median age is 39 years.

  As of July 1, 2007, seniors account for roughly 14% of the province's population, up from 13% in 2002. Among the Western provinces, only in Saskatchewan do seniors constitute a greater proportion of the population at nearly 15%. Similarly, the population in BC aged 15 to 64 years has increased one percentage point in the past five years, reaching over 70%. Meanwhile, the proportion of 0 to 14 years olds (child dependents) has decreased to about 16% from 17% in 2002. By 2036, BC Stats' current projection expects this age group to drop to one eighth of the population. Together, the continuing decline of child dependents and the greater number of seniors will have significant implications for future funding requirements in areas such as education and health care.

  Nationally, the median age of the population continues to rise, reaching 39 years as of July 1st, up from 37.6 in 2002. Seniors account for about 13% of the country's population. This is well behind the OECD's oldest population, Japan, where one fifth of the population in 2005 was 65 or over. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

The Economy

- **An estimated 36,960 British Columbians (*seasonally adjusted*) received regular Employment Insurance benefits in September, a 4.0% decrease in the number of claimants since the previous month.** Regular benefit payments totalled more than $61 million dollars in September. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Agriculture

- **Provincial farm cash receipts increased 2.5% in the third quarter of 2007 compared to the same period in 2006.** Turkey (+36.6%), hen & chicken (+11.4%) and dairy (+10.4%) producers accounted for much of the gain in livestock receipts (+6.5%). Total crop receipts were also higher (+2.0%), as declines in receipts for strawberries (-12.9%) and potatoes (-12.1%) were offset by increases in sales for other berries & grapes (+7.9%), other tree fruits (+6.8%) and floriculture & nursery products (+1.6%).

  Nationally, farm cash receipts climbed 10.0% to $9.8 billion in the third quarter of 2007, as both crop (+24.6%) and livestock (+4.8%) producers saw an increase in revenues. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **In 2006, the net cash income of farmers in BC declined to $243 million, down 33.5% from $366 million in 2005.** At the national level, net cash income fell 14.1% to $5.3 billion. Saskatchewan (+32.3%) and New Brunswick (+8.8%) were the only provinces to record an increase in net cash income in 2006. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Tourism

- **Room revenues in BC were up 0.8% in Au-**

Report

Sharing the Wealth—
Visitor Interests and Expenditures in BC

Did you know...

Fifty-five percent of Canadian shoppers say they won't be putting Chinese-manufactured toys under their Christmas trees this year. *Source: Harris-Decima poll*

gust (*seasonally adjusted*) following a 1.6% decline in the previous month. Most regions recorded gains, including Nechako (+6.9%), Cariboo (+4.0%), North Coast (+3.5%), Northeast (+2.9%), Mainland/Southwest (+1.6%), Kootenay (+1.5%) and Thompson/Okanagan (+0.7%). The only region that showed a decrease was Vancouver Island/Coast (-3.3%).

Returns at the province's hotels rebounded (+1.0%) in August, ending a three-month-long downturn. Motels (+0.9%) and other accommodations (+1.2%) also experienced an increase in room revenues. *Data Source: BC Stats*

- **Total estimated receipts at the province's restaurants, caterers and taverns reached $560 million (*seasonally adjusted*) in September, a decrease of 0.6% from the previous month.** The decrease in sales was due to slower business at BC's food service establishments (-0.5%) and drinking places (-1.2%).

  Nationally, total revenues were 2.2% higher in September as restaurants saw receipts increase by 2.3%, while drinking establishments took in 0.6% less in revenues.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

Education

- **Almost three-quarters (72%) of Canadian parents with school-aged children reported that homework was often a source of stress in the household.** Parents whose children were born outside Canada were less than half as likely (0.36 times as likely) to report that homework was a contributing factor to household stress. Those parents whose highest level of education was less than a high-school diploma were twice as likely to see homework as a source of stress. Other significant factors reported included household income and the child's current level of achievement. Gender of the parent did not appear to be a significant determinant of stress. *Data Source: Canadian Council of Learning*

Health

- **More than half (54%) of Canadian women who gave birth in 2006 rated their experience to be 'very positive' while another quarter (26%) considered it a 'somewhat positive' experience.** Women who had a midwife present at birth were far more likely to rate their experience as 'very positive' (71%) than those whose primary care-giver was a nurse, family physician or obstetrician/gynaecologist (53%). Experiences did not vary significantly with age, location, whether this was the mother's first child or if a caesarean section was performed.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Nearly half a million workers (3.7% of workers) lived and worked with depression in Canada in 2002.** Depression was more common among women (5.1%) than men (2.6%) and much more prevalent among those who were divorced, separated or widowed (7.5%) than those who were married or living in a common-law relationship (3.0%). Most workers (80%) who experienced depression reported that their symptoms interfered with their ability to do their jobs. Workers who reported major depression were unable to work at all for an average of 32 days.

  Data Source: SC Cat. #75-0001-XIE

The Nation

- **Economic output advanced 0.7% in the third quarter of 2007, driven by continued strength in final domestic demand (+1.1%).** Growth in personal expenditures slowed (+0.7%) in the third quarter, while businesses invested heavily in machinery & equipment (+3.6%) and residential structures (+1.3%). Imports surged higher, advancing 4.4%, outpacing the growth of exports (+0.6%) as the Canadian dollar continued to appreciate against the American greenback.

  In the month of September the nation's gross domestic product was up 0.1% (seasonally adjusted) following 0.2% and 0.1% increases in August and July. Growth in the services sector (+0.2%) was partially offset by a decrease in the production of goods (-0.1%). Strong showings both in wholesale trade (+1.0%) and in the energy sector (+0.8%) provided much of the drive for economic growth, while retail trade (-0.3%) and manufacturing (-0.9%) retreated.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline Report

Contact: Neal Dobinson
(250) 387-1124
Originally published in
Tourism Sector Monitor Issue 07-10

Sharing the Wealth—Visitor Interests and Expenditures in B.C.

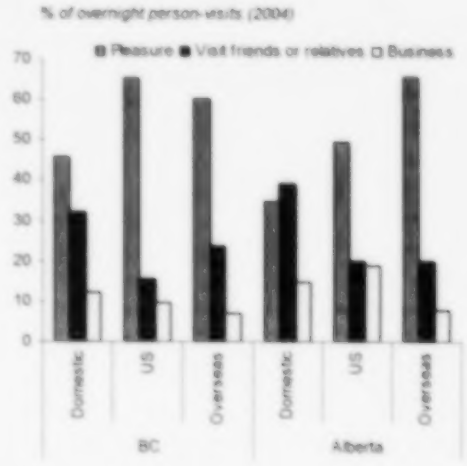
British Columbia provides a wealth of opportunities for domestic, US and overseas visitors through its recreational and cultural amenities and world-class accommodations. In 2005, the tourism sector contributed approximately $5.4 billion to provincial GDP and employed 120,000 workers. Given the importance of this sector to the provincial economy, it is relevant to examine visitors' motivations for travelling to BC and their economic contributions to the province in the form of trip-related expenditures.[1]

Domestic, US and overseas visitors travel to BC primarily for pleasure

Based on overnight domestic visits in 2004, "pleasure" was the most commonly cited reason for travelling to BC (46%) and within Canada (42%). Approximately 4.5 million person-visits were made to the province for that purpose. Compared to Alberta, BC's closest provincial competitor in the tourism market, a lower percentage (35%) of domestic visitors travelled for pleasure.

Visiting friends or relatives was the second most frequently cited reason for visiting BC in 2004, totalling 3.1 million person-visits or 32% of all overnight domestic visits. Business trips comprised 12% of all overnight visits to the province compared to 15% in Alberta and 10% at the national level.

A higher proportion of domestic and US visitors travel to BC for pleasure compared to neighbouring Alberta



Close to 4.0 million visits to BC from the US were recorded in 2004. Most (81%) travelled to the province for pleasure or to visit friends or relatives, a higher proportion compared to Alberta (69%) and the national average (78%). The percentage of overnight visitors from the US that travelled to BC for business purposes (10%) was lower than Alberta (19%) and the national average (13%).

A total of 1.5 million overseas visitors stayed one or more nights in the province in 2004 and a significant proportion (60%) travelled for pleasure. This was lower than Alberta (66%) but above the national average (51%). Business trips accounted for 7% and 8% of total overseas visits to BC and Alberta, respectively. At the national level, 12% of overseas visitors to Canada were business travellers.

[1] Information presented is based on Statistics Canada's Canadian Travel Survey (replaced with the Travel Survey of Residents of Canada in 2005) and International Travel Survey

On a per visit basis, domestic and overseas travellers spend more in BC than in any other province

Domestic overnight visitors to BC spent over $3.1 billion in 2004, or $317 per person-visit. This level of expenditure was the highest in Canada and almost $100 more than the national average ($221). In comparison, average visitor expenditures in Ontario ($202) and Quebec ($192) were well below BC's.

Overseas travellers spend more in BC per visit than US and domestic travellers combined

	Person-Visits (000s)	Average Expenditure ($)	Average Nights
Domestic			
BC	9,809	317	4.2
Alberta	9,245	260	3.2
Ontario	32,431	202	2.9
Quebec	24,830	192	2.7
Canada	91,173	221	3.1
US			
BC*	3,962	518	3.7
Alberta	1,030	748	4.9
Ontario	7,466	418	3.4
Quebec	2,363	587	3.6
Canada	16,502	495	3.7
Overseas			
BC*	1,485	1,126	11.8
Alberta	796	959	9.2
Ontario	1,814	906	12.5
Quebec	978	980	10.7
Canada	5,493	981	11.4

* Includes Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories and Nunavut

Note: Estimates are based on overnight visits

Overnight domestic visitors to BC stayed 4.2 nights in the province in 2004, one night longer than the national average (3.1). In addition, the average duration of overnight trips was higher than Alberta (3.2), Ontario (2.9), and Quebec (2.7). This may explain the relatively high average person-visit expenditure in BC, as visitors tend to stay in the province for a longer period of time and therefore spend more during their trip.

Similar to other provinces and the national average, most expenditures incurred by overnight domestic visitors to BC were related to accommodation ($776.8 million; 25%), food or beverages purchased at restaurants or bars ($615.5 million; 20%) and vehicle costs ($510.8 million; 16%).

US visitors to BC spent on average $518 per person-visit in 2004. This was higher than the national average ($495) but below the average expenditure in Alberta ($748) and Quebec ($587). Overall, expenditures by US overnight visitors were approximately $2.1 billion.

In 2004, visitors from overseas countries stayed in the province for 11.8 nights on average and spent $1,126 per visit. This was higher than in any other region in Canada. While more overseas visitors travelled to Ontario (1.8 million) than BC (1.5 million), the average person-visit expenditure was 24% higher in BC.

Overall, overseas visitors to BC spent more than domestic and US visitors combined ($835) on a per person-visit basis. Given that the average stay for overseas visitors is about three times longer compared to domestic and US visitors, this is not a surprising result.

While most of the wealth is generated by domestic and US visitors, overseas travellers are a growing market

In 2004, nine in ten (90%) overnight visitors to BC were of domestic or US origin and accounted for approximately three-quarters (76%) of total visitor expenditures. Although only 10% were from overseas countries, they generated the remaining 24% ($1.7 billion) of total expenditures. Consequently, the average expenditure for overseas visitors was more than double the US average and almost four times the domestic average. Recently, the proportion of visitor entries from the US

has been declining (83% in 2002 to 79% in 2006) while overseas entries have been increasing (17% to 21%). If the downward trend in US visitation continues, which is likely given the continued appreciation of the Canadian dollar and increased security requirements, overseas visitors will become an increasingly important contributor to BC's tourism sector.

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Email transmission information service from BC Stats

also on the Internet at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jul 1/07	% change on one year ago
BC	4,380.3	1.4
Canada	32,976.0	1.0
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 8)		
(BC - at market prices)	2006	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	180,328	6.4
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	158,335	3.3
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita)*	36,649	1.9
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	23,996	5.0
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Sep	3,517	-3.7
Merchandise Exports - Sep	2,481	-2.4
Retail Sales - Sep	4,730	0.1
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on one year ago	12-month avg % change
(all items - Oct 2007)		
BC	1.6	1.8
Vancouver	1.8	2.2
Victoria	0.8	1.2
Canada	2.4	2.0
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)	Oct '07	% change on prev. month
(seasonally adjusted)		
Labour Force - BC	2,376	0.3
Employed - BC	2,273	0.3
Unemployed - BC	104	1.0
		Sep '07
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	4.4	4.3
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	5.8	5.9
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Nov 28/07	Nov 29/06
Prime Business Rate	6.25	6.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	7.20	6.40
- 5 year	7.39	6.55
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Nov 28/07	Nov 29/06
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	0.9908	1.1360
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	1.0141	0.8788
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE	Oct '07	% change on one year ago
(industrial aggregate - dollars)		
BC	748.87	2.2
Canada	763.91	4.1

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

2006 Census Profiles

New! Federal Electoral District profiles

Province profiles

We have profiles for approximately 1,700 different places. New for this cycle is the addition of a comparison area to help you identify which characteristics set a particular place apart from the 'norm'. Since we offer a choice between two comparison areas for each location, there are 3,400 profiles in all. Navigation for the 'A' series profiles is now complete. These feature a comparison to BC, except FEDs are compared to their province and BC (province total) is compared to Canada. For 'B' series, comparisons are to Canada, except CSDs and DPLs are compared to their Regional District, and CTs are compared to their CA/CMA.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/profiles/detailed/choose.asp

Small Business Profile

A joint product of BC Stats, the Ministry of Small Business and Revenue, Small Business BC and Western Economic Diversification Canada, this annual publication provides a profile of BC's small businesses, including number of businesses, employment and GDP.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/sm_bus.asp#sbp

Released this week by BC Stats

- Business Indicators, November 2007
- Current Statistics, November 2007

Next week

- Tourism Sector Monitor, November 2007
- 2006 Census (Tuesday, December 4th)
  Language, Immigration, Mobility and Migration
- Labour Force Statistics, November 2007
- Earnings & Employment Trends, Nov. 2007

BC Stats, Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9V1
Tel: (250) 387-0327 Fax: (250) 387-0329 Web: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca E-mail: BC.Stats@gov.bc.ca